

accessible route such as a sidewalk; and that the entrance door and all interior passage doors are at least 2 feet 10 inches wide, allowing 32 inches of clear passage space. A visitable home also serves persons without disabilities, such as a mother pushing a stroller or a person delivering a large appliance. More information about Visitability is available at <http://concretechange.home.mindspring.com/index.htm>.

Activities support strategic goals 2, 3, and 4.

(2) Universal Design. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate universal design in the construction or rehabilitation of housing, retail establishments, and community facilities funded with HUD assistance. Universal design is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The intent of universal design is to simplify life for everyone by making products, communications, and the built environment more usable by as many people as possible at little or no extra cost. Universal design benefits people of all ages and abilities. In addition to any applicable required accessibility features under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 or the design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Act, the Department encourages applicants to incorporate the principles of universal design when developing housing, community facilities, and electronic communication mechanisms, or when communicating with community residents at public meetings or events. HUD believes that by creating housing that is accessible to all, it can increase the supply of affordable housing for all, regardless of ability or age. Likewise, creating places where people work, train, and interact which are useable and open to all residents increases opportunities for economic and personal self-sufficiency. More information on Universal Design is available from the Center for Universal Design, at <http://www.ncsu.edu/www/ncsu/design/sod5/cud/> or the Resource Center on Accessible Housing and Universal Design, at http://www.abledata.com/Site_2/accessib.htm.

Activities support strategic goals 1, 2, 3, and 4.

(D) Providing Full and Equal Access to Grassroots Faith-Based and Other Community-Based Organizations in HUD Program Implementation.

(1) HUD encourages nonprofit organizations, including grassroots faith-based and other community-based

organizations, to participate in the vast array of programs for which funding is available through this NOFA and the SuperNOFA. HUD also encourages states, units of local government, universities and colleges and other organizations to partner with grassroots organizations, e.g., civic organizations, faith-communities, and grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations that have not been effectively utilized. These grassroots organizations have a strong history of providing vital community services such as assisting the homeless and preventing homelessness, counseling individuals and families on fair housing rights, providing elderly housing opportunities, developing first time homeownership programs, increasing homeownership and rental housing opportunities in neighborhoods of choice, developing affordable and accessible housing in neighborhoods across the country, creating economic development programs, and supporting the residents of public housing facilities. HUD wants to make its programs more effective, efficient, and accessible by expanding opportunities for grassroots organizations to participate in developing solutions for their own neighborhoods. Additionally, HUD encourages applicants to include these grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations in their workplans. Applicants, their partners, and participants must review the ICDBG NOFA or Program Section of the SuperNOFA to determine whether they are eligible to apply for funding directly or whether they must establish a working relationship with an eligible applicant in order to participate in a HUD funding opportunity. Grassroots faith-based and other community-based organizations, and applicants who currently or propose to partner, fund, subgrant or subcontract with grassroots organizations (including grassroots faith-based or other community-based non-profits eligible under applicable program regulations) in conducting their work programs will receive higher rating points as specified in the NOFA.

(2) Definition of Grassroots Organizations.

(a) HUD will consider an organization a "grassroots organization" if the organization is headquartered in the local community to which it provides services; and,

(i) Has a social services budget of \$300,000 or less, or

(ii) Has six or fewer full-time equivalent employees.

(b) Local affiliates of national organizations are not considered "grassroots." Local affiliates of national

organizations are encouraged, however, to partner with grassroots organizations but must demonstrate that they are currently working with a grassroots organization (e.g., having a faith-community or civic organization, or other charitable organization provide volunteers).

(c) The cap provided in paragraph (2)(a)(i) above includes only that portion of an organization's budget allocated to providing social services. It does not include other portions of the budget such as salaries and expenses not directly expended in the provision of social services.

Activities support strategic goal 6.

(E) Colonias. The Department of Housing and Urban Development is seeking to improve housing conditions for families living in Colonias. Colonias means any identifiable, rural community that:

- Is located in Arizona, California, New Mexico, or Texas;
- Is within 150 miles of the border between the United States and Mexico; and
- Is determined to be a colonia on the basis of objective need criteria, including lack of potable water supply, lack of adequate sewage systems, and lack of decent, safe, sanitary, and accessible housing.

Applicants proposing to create affordable housing and provide services to the Colonias will receive higher rating points.

Activities support strategic goals 1, 2, 3, and 4.

(F) Participation of Minority Serving Institutions in HUD Programs. Pursuant to Executive Orders 13256 President's Board of Advisors on Historically Black Colleges and Universities, 13230 President's Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans, 13216 Increasing Participation of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in Federal Programs, and 13270 Tribal Colleges and Universities, HUD is strongly committed to broadening the participation of Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) in its programs. HUD is interested in increasing the participation of MSIs in order to advance the development of human potential, strengthen the Nation's capacity to provide high quality education, and increase opportunities for MSIs to participate and benefit from federal financial assistance programs. HUD encourages all applicants and recipients to include meaningful participation of MSIs in their work programs. A listing of MSIs can be found on the Department of Education Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/>